



News Release

For Immediate Release:
Tuesday, September 26, 2006
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New Tool Available for Utah's “Do-Not-Resuscitate” (DNR) Program

(Salt Lake City, UT) – The Utah Department of Health’s (UDOH) Bureau of Emergency Medical Services (BEMS) is announcing changes to Utah’s EMS Do-Not-Resuscitate Program (DNR) that should ensure the wishes of loved ones will be recognized during emergency care.

Effective immediately, at the request of the physician of a terminally ill patient, a Do-Not-Resuscitate (DNR) order may be added to a patient’s medic alert bracelet. Most emergency responders will initiate CPR or other life-prolonging measures unless they see a recognized Do-Not-Resuscitate (DNR) order for the patient. The Bureau of EMS completed a rule revision, (R426-100) and entered into a memorandum of agreement with the Medic Alert Foundation (MAF).

Medic Alert Foundation is a non-profit, public service foundation with experience and expertise in the production and supply of medical information devices. The agreement between BEMS and Medic Alert Foundation will allow patients to choose between the vinyl hospital-type wristband or a metal Medic Alert bracelet or necklace, which can help speed identification in emergent situations.

“With approval from their physicians, the options will provide the Emergency Medical Service responder a clear and legal direction of the DNR Directive, and will also be a comfort to Utahns ensuring their wishes are honored and legally recognized.” Said Don Wood, DNR program manager, Bureau of EMS, UDOH. “It is a legal way for choices to be recognized and honored by anyone who might be terminally ill in clarifying and legalizing their wishes to their loved ones and EMS responders.”

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To facilitate implementation of this new rule, the Utah Department of Health, Bureau of EMS, and the Medic Alert Foundation will team up for a statewide DNR "Safety Stand Down" so all EMS personnel and all licensed and designated EMS agencies can have the opportunity to learn about the new rule and Medic Alert's products in an educational setting.

The DNR "Safety Stand Down" will occur on September 27, 2006 at 1:00 p.m. "We encourage all of Utah's Emergency Medical Service providers and their personnel to participate," said Paul Patrick, director, Bureau of EMS, UDOH. "The new changes in our DNR Program will allow emergency medical services personnel to recognize and quickly identify a patients' choice not to be resuscitated. It will also, for the first time, provide an option for the patient."

For more information about the changes in Utah's "Do Not Resuscitate" program, visit UDOH's Bureau of Emergency Medical Services Web site at www.health.utah.gov/ems or contact the DNR program coordinator at (801) 538-6287.

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The mission of the Utah Department of Health is to protect the public's health through preventing avoidable illness, injury, disability and premature death, assuring access to affordable, quality health care, and promoting healthy lifestyles.